



DORSET HOUSE SCHOOL

Accessibility Plan 2025 - 2028

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1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Dorset House School strives to be a fully inclusive and welcoming school and therefore aims to ensure that each and every pupil can participate fully in the life of the school.

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as follows: 'A physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse impact on a person's ability to carry out normal everyday activities'. This has some overlap with the definition of 'special educational needs' in the Children and Families Act 2014.

In accordance with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, the school is required to have an accessibility plan which addresses within a reasonable timeframe:

- How we plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils (and those with special educational needs) can participate in the school's curriculum;
- How we can improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled; and
- How we can improve the physical environment of the school in order to increase the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the school.

We value the diversity of the school community and appreciate the contribution that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can bring to school life; we therefore seek to remove barriers to entry for pupils with special needs and/or disabilities.

2. ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

PLEASE REFER TO OUR 'LEARNING DEVELOPMENT POLICY' AND 'ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE POLICY' FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

We are a non-selective preparatory school which prepares pupils for Pre-Test exams at age 11 and for Common Entrance exams at age 13 for those senior schools still requiring 13+ exams. Other pupils aged 13 take internally set 13+ exams. Pupils with diagnoses of moderate and specific Learning Difficulties can be catered for with Exam Access Arrangements on the understanding that they move on to an appropriate senior school offering appropriate support. We aim to provide pupils with specific learning difficulties the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced curriculum alongside their peers.

Providing all pupils with access to the curriculum is an ongoing and continuous process. Our plan for the next 3 year period (1st September 2024 – 31st August 2027) is as follows:

	ACTION	TIMESCALE
1.	Assessment of new pupils for learning difficulties to ensure correct curriculum provision is offered	Ongoing
2.	Provision of appropriate additional support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers provide differentiated support in the classroom with TA support in some lessons One to one or small group lessons are provided by the Learning Development team Recruitment of additional staff or use of outside specialists according to the pupils' specific needs SENDCo to audit curriculum provision for SEND pupils via lesson observations and discussions with teachers and pupils (where applicable) to provide feedback when sharing good practice 1-1 Learning development lessons provided for those with additional learning support needs. 	Ongoing – in response to individual needs Ongoing – in response to individual needs Ongoing – in response to individual needs Ongoing – in response to individual needs Ongoing – in response to individual needs
3.	Liaison with outside agencies according to the needs of individual pupils including EHCP reviews with LA	Ongoing – in response to individual needs Annual Review of EHCP student May 2024
4.	Teaching assistant and teacher INSET training to cover awareness and support for pupils with specific learning difficulties and / or disabilities	Ongoing – in response to individual needs Sept 2018 - INSET session Nov 2022 - Disability workshop Jan 2023 - INSET on Autism spectrum Sept 2023 INSET – Review of SPLD pupils Sept 2023 – Feb 2024 – ELSA (Emotional Literacy training, Jo Truscott, Pre-Prep LD)
5.	Use technology to provide greater access to the curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surface go devices for Year 7 upwards Surface go devices/tablets for younger pupils with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities Pearson Maths, Century and other software packages 	2023 to 2025 Provision of Surface Go devices to younger children who would benefit from using them. Regular touch-typing sessions for year 5 onwards. Coloured background facility on computers. Advice on Scanner Pens for struggling readers.

These action points are unchanged on our prior 3 year plan and represent our aim to continue to enhance access to our curriculum in accordance with the specific needs of our pupils. Improvements achieved over the last few years, for each of the above action points, are as follows:

	ACHIEVEMENT	DATE COMPLETED
1.	Pre-Prep Infant Language assessment for Reception children Read, Write Inc testing for Reception to Year 2 GL reading test for Year 1 GL SWST for Years 1 to 4 Suffolk reading test for Years 2 to 4 GL NGRT 2 and HAST SWST for Year 5 NGRT 3/SWRT and HAST SWST for Years 5 to 7 DASH handwriting speed tests CEM tests for Year 6	September 2014 Ongoing September 2021 Annually in the Autumn term
2.	Appointment of a Head of Learning Development for the Pre-Prep Improvement to Learning Development room within the Pre-Prep Specialist speech therapist recruited Additional teaching assistants employed for the Pre-Prep Additional teaching assistant employed in the Prep 1:1 Teaching assistant employed in Reception 1:1 Higher Level TA for individual Year 5 pupil	September 2012 September 2019 April 2014 September 2013 September 2017 September 2022 September 2023
3.	Termly INSET and issues / points to be aware of covered at weekly staff meetings	Continuous

3. PROVISION OF INFORMATION

The improvement of the delivery of information to disabled pupils is, similarly, an ongoing process and, in part, in response to specific needs as and when they arise. Our 3-year plan is as follows:

	ACTION	TIMESCALE
1.	Provision of information / work for pupils unable to attend school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send work via email • Online teaching using Teams 	Ongoing – as required March 2020 - provision of online teaching for students using Teams
2.	Increase information available on the web-site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add parent portal • Review functionality and content of parent portal 	Added Sept 2017 2017/18
3.	Use portal messaging and email to improve home / school communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class List app introduced 	Ongoing Nov 2022
4.	Use technology to assist in the provision of information as required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased font size / formatting for communications, as required • Delivery of information in different ways e.g. oral; use of IWB for visual reinforcement of auditory information • Nessy, Wordshark, Numbershark, Mathletics, Century. 	Coloured backgrounds for computers/smart boards Speech to Text provision as needed. Reader Pens – advice and provision as needed.

4. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Dorset House occupies a rural site in West Sussex. The administrative, catering & dining and boarding facilities are situated in a 12th century Manor House, spread across three floors. Two separate teaching blocks house the Pre-Prep (built circa 1965) and the Prep (built 2003). Both teaching blocks have two storeys; classrooms in the Pre-Prep are configured by year group together with dedicated rooms for Art, Science and IT, and classrooms in the Prep are configured by subject. None of the buildings have lifts and planning constraints and / or financial resource limitations prohibit the installation. The school is also situated on undulating ground. Taken together, these factors mean that, in their current configuration, our site and buildings are intrinsically problematic to disabled access.

We do, however, make every attempt we can to make reasonable adjustments for disabled access – this includes both those adjustments which are financially and structurally possible and those adjustments which are of a very short-term nature. For example, we will provide auxiliary aids as and when required. In planning development or improvements to our facilities, we also seek to ensure that new developments will include good disabled access.

	ACTION	TIMESCALE
1.	Install ramps and other aids as and when required	Ongoing Ramp added to EYFS outside play area (April 2014) New front office/Pre-Prep assembly hall (2019-20) has level access. 2 new minibuses from Oct 2023 have space for a wheelchair and ramped access.
2.	Reconfigure timetable / location of classes to accommodate, for a short period of time, a wheelchair bound pupil	Ongoing – as required (Wheelchair bound pupils successfully attended school for summer terms of 2014 and 2018)
3.	Improve facilities in disabled WC in Prep and Pre-Prep buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add emergency pull cord / panic alarm 	Added January 2015
4.	Add hearing loops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate in A/V installation in the Barn 	June 2015
5.	Consider and provide, as far as possible, for disabled access in all new developments on the site	As and when projects are undertaken Toilet in Pre-Prep refurbished and made more accessible as part of front office/Pre-Prep works (2019-20). New toilets installed in Manor tunnel in Spring 2023 - not DDA compliant but accessible.